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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

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September 10, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HC*
SUBJECT: Morning Report on Hijacking Situation

Below are described the main developments since yesterday evening on the hijacking situation.

Passengers, Aircraft and Negotiations

Red Cross representative Rochat reports that:

- The deadline on the ultimatum has been extended by the PFLP for an additional 72 hours. Presumably it would now expire at 10 p.m. EDT on Saturday.
- The number of Palestinians in Israeli hands whose release is being demanded by the PFLP is "very high indeed."
- He anticipates negotiations that may carry on for "several weeks."
- He is "most interested" in what the U.S. action might be in a "final crash."

For the first time, in a series of discussions with Rochat, an Embassy officer detected a note of real pessimism creeping into his attitude.

Although the deadline has been extended the lives of the passengers are still very much in danger. The fedayeen, apparently nervous over the possibility of outside intervention, have told Rochat that if there is any foreign military action in Jordan the three planes and all their occupants will be blown up. An attack on the hotel in Amman where some of the passengers are staying is also possible. Heavy fighting broke out in the vicinity of the hotel last night and the building took several

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direct hits, although apparently none of the guests were injured. Our Embassy in Amman also points out that the status of the passengers is shifting from that of pawns in a terrorist publicity game to that of instruments being used by the fedayeen in a political struggle with the Jordanian Government.

Situation in Amman

A pooled dispatch by several U.S. correspondents reflects continued fighting in Amman during the early morning hours. Guerrillas and the security forces were trading shots and fighting was going on in several areas of the city, including at the airport. Many houses are said to have been destroyed.

The Embassy reports that King Hussein still appears unwilling to take the final military confrontation with the fedayeen. They continue to believe, however, that the army would come out on top, even if the Iraqis joined the fedayeen.

Diplomatic Situation

The UN Security Council met for a short session last evening to approve, by consensus, a resolution expressing grave concern at the hijackings, and calling for the release of the passengers. The resolution also called for all possible legal steps to be taken to ensure against further hijackings and other interference with international travel. Ambassador Yost notes that the resolution puts both the Soviets and the Syrians squarely and unequivocally behind the appeal for the release of the hostages.

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